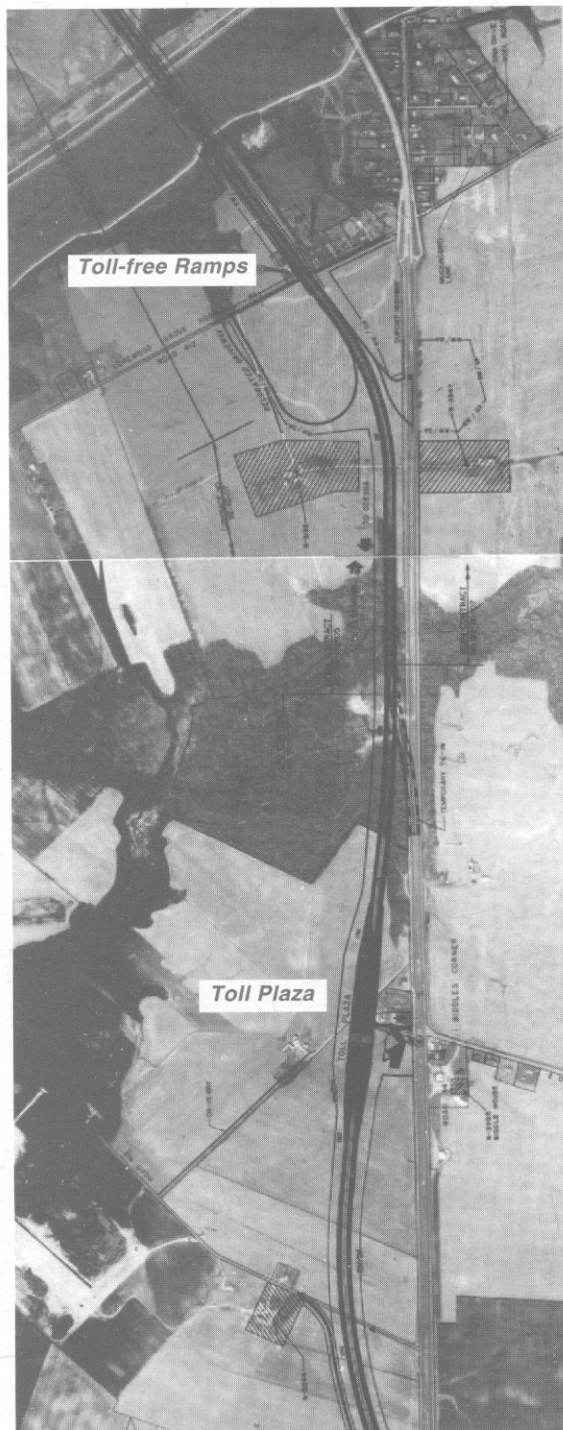


On the Road

THE RELIEF ROUTE — SR 1

Special Edition — DELAWARE ROUTE 7 TO US ROUTE 113 — January 1997



An aerial plan from January 1993 (above) shows the location of the toll plaza near Biddles Corner and future toll-free ramps—just south of the canal—linking US 13 with the new C&D Canal Bridge. Time-line (right) indicates major milestones since 1987 in locating the New Castle County toll plaza.

SR 1 TOLL PLAZA

There's been some recent confusion and misinformation about the Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT's) plans for its Relief Route (SR 1) toll plaza in southern New Castle County. This special edition of *On the Road* presents the history of the key issues being raised.

Toll collection is necessary at both ends of SR 1 to generate revenues for continued construction and maintenance. As far back as the mid 1980s, there was concern that SR 1 was being built with Delawareans' tax dollars, yet was expected to carry out-of-state traffic. In response, DelDOT conducted its first toll study in 1987 which confirmed that tolling was the best way to help pay for the highway. The study predicted that about half of the tolls would be paid by out-of-state motorists.

Motorists will always have a choice between two parallel north-south highways in Delaware—one tolled and limited-access (SR 1), and the other toll-free with at-grade intersections (US 13). Traffic volume at the toll plaza in the year 2000 is projected to be 20,000 vehicles per day (or 7.3 million vehicles per year). In 2020, about double that number of vehicles will pass through the toll plaza. Most of these will be former users of US 13. Removing these vehicles from US 13 will enable it to be used more safely and efficiently by local traffic. In addition, ramps are proposed south of the new C&D Canal Bridge which will connect SR 1 and US 13 for toll-free access to and from north of the canal.

The toll plaza has been on DelDOT's plans for its current location—west of US 13 opposite Port Penn Road—since early 1991. After studying several locations, DelDOT selected the Biddles Corner site in late 1990, and then presented it on plans at a series of public workshops beginning in April 1991 (see time-line at right).

Public meetings, briefings with elected officials, news stories, and *On the Road* project newsletters have publicized the toll plaza plans since that time. Because SR 1 is the state's largest public-works project, DelDOT has conducted an unprecedented level of public outreach for the SR 1 project. DelDOT and its consultants met and corresponded often with residents, home builders, county planning officials, and business owners along the right-of-way of the Relief Route, to work out details during final design. *On the Road* is mailed at least semiannually to over 5,000 recipients. The Delaware news media has closely followed DelDOT's progress and serves a major role in advertising all

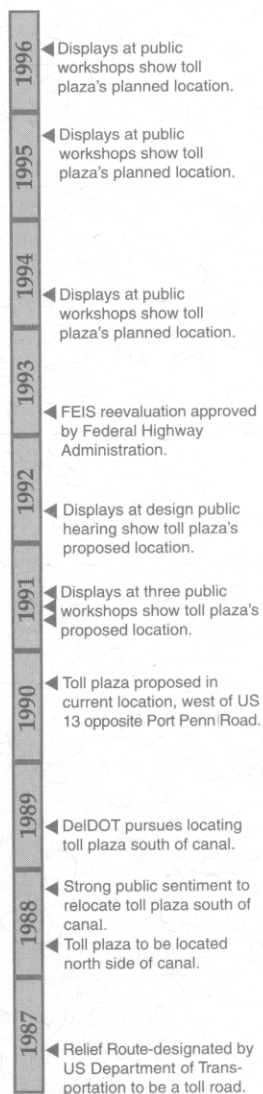
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Delaware Department of
Transportation

Anne P. Canby
Secretary

On the Road is published periodically by the Delaware Department of Transportation and is the official newsletter of SR 1, the US Route 13 Relief Route.



On the Road

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TO OUR READERS

The State of Delaware and the consultant team are committed to continuing the citizen-input process during the design and construction phases of the project. We invite you to write us with questions or comments regarding *On the Road* or to arrange for a presentation to bring your group up to date on the Relief Route.

For More INFORMATION

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- Public information: contact Christine Gillan, manager of external affairs, at 302-739-4313
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public workshops and hearings. In June 1991, DelDOT even installed signs along US 13 marking the planned location of the Relief Route, with a toll-free phone number for up-to-the-minute project information.

DelDOT has made significant efforts to minimize impacts of the toll plaza on neighboring communities. The plaza is sited about three-quarters mile away from existing and proposed communities. It is at least eight feet below the grade of surrounding land to the west. Plans call for a continuous landscaping west of SR 1 from Asbury Chase to Scott Run, as well as special directional lighting which will focus light downward, on the paved area, with minimal spill-over. Electronic toll collection facilities will allow some motorists to pay their toll without having to stop at a toll booth, thereby lessening the number of vehicles stopping and accelerating.

Environmental impacts were a major consideration in planning the Relief Route and all agencies involved in the process—in-

cluding the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—approved DelDOT's plans. DelDOT prepared a federally required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Relief Route, which was approved in 1987 and then reevaluated and approved again in 1993. All potential impacts caused by SR 1 were thoroughly investigated in the EIS, including impacts to air quality, wetlands, noise levels, community cohesion, and historic resources, among many others. In response to recent community concerns, DelDOT conducted another special air-pollution study. The results indicate that emissions will be well below standards established by the EPA.

Plans for the toll plaza near Biddles Corner have been in place for more than five years. Public outreach for and environmental analysis of the Relief Route project—including the siting of the toll plaza—has been continuous and well beyond any effort ever undertaken. DelDOT is committed to continuing this open dialogue with the public as the project continues. ■